DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 095 067 95 SO 007 700

AUTHOR Creighton, David L.
TITLE Philosophies, Incentives and Education.
SPONS AGENCY National Inst. of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE [74]
CONTRACT NIE-P-74-0125
NOTE 45p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.75 HC-$1.85 PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS Decision Making; *Educational Philosophy; *Educational Policy; Educational Research; *Incentive Systems; *Motivation; Open Education; Progressive Education; Values

ABSTRACT

This paper shows that educational philosophies are relevant to the currently popular subject of incentive offerings in educational contexts in two ways: through the philosophies of education held by individual educators and through the application of philosophical analysis to issues raised in the current literature. First the characteristics of an educational philosophy are discussed, including the common characteristics of progressive and open education. Next the meaning, use, and origin of the term incentive in an educational setting are discussed, which lead to the conflict between the educational philosophies historically propounded in the United States and incentive systems and to the long term consequences of incentives systems. Justification for an incentive system, as for an education policy, is taken up last and is touched on in light of the major issue of values. Five proposals are made: definition of the term "incentive", studies of the long range consequences of use of incentives in changing people's motivations, relative merits of inducements versus incentives, study of the permanency of incentive-induced behavior, and review of philosophic thought directed toward reasoning as it occurs in justifications of educational policy. (JH)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRO
DUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM
THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGIN
ATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS
STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRE
SENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

ED 095067

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

SP 007 900

PHILOSOPHIES, INCENTIVES AND EDUCATION

by

David L. Creighton

Prepared under contract to the National Institute of Education (DHEW Contract No. NIE-P-74-0125). The views expressed herein are for exploration and discussion and do not necessarily reflect the viewpoint of the NIE.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

GENERAL AIMS AND METHODS

The focus of this paper will be on the currently popular subject of incentive offerings in educational contexts. I hope to show that philosophies are relevant to this subject in two ways;

1. through the philosophies of education held by individual educators, and
2. through the application of philosophical analysis to issues raised in the current literature.

For these reasons we will first discuss the general nature of a 'philosophy of education' and then turn to philosophical problems related to the theoretical concept of, and practical application of, incentives in education. In the course of these discussions, questions will arise concerning the value of and possible justification for the use of educational incentives. I wish to stress at the outset the tentative and speculative nature of this paper. The study of the practical application of incentive offerings to professional educators and in educational contexts is not only new, but is also plagued by conceptual difficulties in its more theoretical forms. Furthermore, this is a cross disciplinary study. Having been a professional educator in higher education does not make one an expert in the problems of K-12. To a certain extent therefore the application of the issues raised here will have to be made by those more directly involved in such situations.

I say that this paper is from the point of view of professional philosophy - or one professional philosopher - to warn you as to both the unusual style of some of the discussions and to their limitations.

Professional philosophers are as limited as anyone else in what they are competent to do. They are not, qua philosophers, competent to do empirical science; any more than empirical scientists are competent to do philosophy. Educators today are interested in incentives in education, and may therefore be interested in whether or not the incentives that operate on educators are the same as or different than those which operate on ordinary mortals. This is an empirical question - call the psychologists. They may begin by taking a random sampling of non-educators and finding out by intricate testing and statistical analyses what incentives operate more forcefully upon them. Doing the same thing with a random group of educators and comparing the results would probably answer the question.

I don't want to suggest that philosophers can be of no help at all in such matters; but what help they can give is of a very specialized sort. Many contemporary philosophers study and use the techniques of conceptual and linguistic analysis.[1] The aim is to prevent or clear up confusions which might impede progress in the solution of outstanding problems both within philosophy and without, and also to identify any confusions which might have led to spurious problems. As we shall see

there are a considerable number of conceptual questions to be raised about the notion of an incentive and some of these lead inrather interesting directions.

The area of values is another place where philosophers have concentrated their attention; and with good results. Philosophers are not, of course, in the business of making moral pronouncements. In a sense they study values - though, again, not in the way in which sociologists or psychologists do. Since the question of adopting incentives in education is one of policy, and concerns the value of incentive programs, this paper will also raise issues as to the possible justification of incentive programs.

CHARACTERISTICS OF AN EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

When we are interested in the place of philosophies, theories of education or ideologies in educational decisions and practices, just what sorts of things are we talking about? The word 'philosophy' is used for a wide variety of things, starting with the work of a Plato, Hegel or John Dewey. This would be philosophy in the traditional or more strict sense. But other things get called philosophy, too. A coach might be asked for his philosophy of the post season bowl game, and Daryl Royal of Texas is said to have responded to this as the country girl - 'I'll dance with who brung me'; meaning that he wasn't going to change his game from what had worked all sea-

son. We know that other coaches have other philosophies - say to surprise their opponents. Now if all this is philosophy in some sense, how much is really important for education, and why?

Like a coaching philosophy, an educator's philosophy of education contains general principles of wisdom which he uses to guide his conduct. When we ask someone for his philosophy of education he is likely to give us those principles which to him are most overriding and important; and against which he measures more specific proposals and acts. Occasionally it is necessary to give a justification for these principles and this process may or may not involve reference to philosophies in the more strict sense of the various 'isms' (e.g. Materialism, Idealism or Existentialism) or various disciplines (e.g. metaphysics or epistemology). We will return to this problem later. For now we can at least say that many if not most educators have an educational philosophy in the sense that they hold to some general principles about the conduct of education which they regard as overridingly important. One such philosophical principle might be that the classroom should be democratically organized (associated with the open classroom concept). The feature of such a belief that is most significant for educational decision and practice is that philosophies of education are not things which one would feel comfortable giving up or violating. They are not mere preferences; but <u>overriding principles</u>, and general aims

and commitments. It should be clear that philosophies of education as described above include such diverse things as ideologies, educational creeds, educational theories, etc.

We should also note that groups or institutions - including individual schools or school boards - may have philosophies. These are overriding not only in the sense just discussed, but also in that the members feel required, at least in their official capacities, to ascede to them or to leave the group (if they cannot convince the group or institution that its philosophy should be changed.) These institutionalized philosophies of education are most significant for the decision process in groups. Individuals don't ususally write down their educational creeds; but institutions do. Once they are written down, people feel compelled by them in a way not otherwise present. There is in such cases a simple and obvious way to be convicted of hypocrisy. In fact let me underline this point by saying that the overriding character of philosophies is most easily seen in an institutional situation. The decision process in the individual vis a vis that person's philosophy is the group's process writ small. We have seen that a philosophy is a principle against which a specific proposal can be measured. If a group with a well defined philosophy gets a proposal that tends to violate that philosophy, it must in a sense turn it down. (Changing a group's philosophy is not all that easy or that common.) The reasonsing will be quite objective and impersonal. Does the proposal violate our

philosophy or not? This philosophy may then appear as a super-personal force requiring a certain decision even when the members of the group would rather do otherwise. There are of course other even more obvious examples. Judges are expected to rule on the basis of established legal principles - regardless of their own preferences.

Though this overridingness comes out most clearly in the reasonings of groups, it is present in individuals. There still exist in this world men and women of principle. What we mean when we say this is that they make their decisions in the light of their principles. If I want to lie about something but am a man of principle I will not. Though I control what principles I adopt, once adopted they exert a controlling influence on decision processes. I may of course be a hypocrit - say I believe something but not actually use it to base my decisions on. In such cases we are sometimes hard put to determine whether what is involved in hypocrisy, weakness of will, change of heart, etc. Of course there are men who 'lack principles' - by which we mean that nothing exerts a regulating influence over their desires and decisions.

What is presented here is not even close to a 'theory of decision'; it is only an attempt to point out one often neglected aspect of some of our most difficult and important decisions. Many educators and educational groups do adopt philosophies of education which if sincerely held do function in the manner described.

Suggest to a teacher that some new procedure be adopted in the classroom and the teacher may respond, "My philosophy is that children should not be...", and what follows is an educational principle that precludes the adoption of the suggestion. If a school board as a whole has adopted a certain philosophy - say that children should be educated in their own neighborhood schools in order to provide as much continuity as possible with the rest of their experiences as well as giving them a sense of security and belonging - you will find considerable resistence to any higher administrative or legal requirement to the opposite effect.

Firstly, then, our philosophies of education act regulatively to preclude as a matter of principle certain practices and require others. But secondly, they act as pervasive concerns that permeate all our individual acts. If a teacher's philosophy is that children should be treated democratically (the open education movement) this will not only forbid her adoption of certain practices and require others but will pervade all the individual interactions she has with students. In addition, the adoption of such a philosophy may also act suggestively. The teacher may create a new classroom procedure because of her adoption of a certain philosophy. And not only procedures but the very aims and purposes of education may be suggested by a philosophy.

It should also be pointed out that it is not merely distincitively educational principles which will have such influ-

ences; but all of a person's basic values. There is nothing distinctively educational about the principles that we should not affirm what we know to be false. Yet educators, like everyone else, may be asked or tempted to do such things and here again, whether and to what extent the educator is a person of principle will determine her reaction. In an educational context, of course, these principles will not be as likely to act suggestively as will distinctively educational ones.

It will help at this point to have one or two examples of educational philosophies before us. For many years and until fairly recently, Progressivism was the dominant educational philosophy in the United States.[2] Today, a newer relative of Progressivism, using various forms of the word 'open' is becoming highly popular. This Open Education Movement[3] - as we may call it - has enough similarity to the older Progressive Education Movement that it will be worthwhile to point these out as an indication of which elements in this country's educational philosophy are most strongly held to. If it then becomes apparent that there are conflicts between these pervasive elements of educational philosophy in America and the current proposals for incentives in education, it will be not only worth noting but exploring further.

The most universal feature of both progressive and open education is an emphasis on the interests of the child. Today this is called a child centered approach. The view is that a child has a natural curiosity about the world around him and

that he will learn best if his school experiences build on the things he is already interested in. This does not mean that he must be interested directly in all the things schools will need to teach; but rather, that an interest can at least be developed perhaps by a relationship discovered between his current interests and the other material.

Not only is this approach thought of as child centered, it is also thought of as bringing democracy to the classroom, since students have a voice in what will be studied. Both progressive and open educators emphasize the use of field trips and other similar devices to stimulate the child's curiosity and bring about interests in a wide variety of subject matters. Again, the main feature is the development of the learning situation from the child's already present desire to learn.

In at least one important respect, the offering of incentives in education goes against this strongest of traditions in modern education. Both Progressivism and the Open Education movement held that the educational situation should be an outgrowth of the natural inclinations of the child. Not only does one not find that emphasis in the literature on classroom incentives, it seems that the idea is to offer the child a reward other than the satisfaction of his own curiosity. But this point will require further examination.

Adopting various philosophies of education will produce different educational practices by having us select different facts (or weight them differently) as considerations in making

our decisions. Of course various versions of our philosophies can be more or less well presented and more or less thoroughly argued for. Sometimes we may make logical errors, but there are also errors of a subtler sort. For example, if one takes the view that a certain proposition is a fact, then he will give it less careful scrutiny than if it is straightforwardly evaluative. Now many philosophies of education - certainly progressive and open education - put forth views about the way children learn. These might be put as: 'children learn by...' and the assertion is in the form of a factual statement. If I want children to learn I will, it seems, have to adopt the specified procedures. But obviously children <u>did</u> learn even under the most traditional of practices. If I come to regard this as what it is, <u>viz</u>. a disguised way of saying something like 'real' or 'genuine' learning, I will be more likely to ask questions. I may come to wonder why one way to learn is more 'real' than another. So, whereas I thought that I had to use certain practices, I now see that there are alternatives - among which I can choose, or at least demand further justification.

A second example will be instructive. "Opening...reflects more accurately the process, movement and continual dynamic growth of child centered - as opposed to teacher centered - classrooms."[4] The philosopher, C. L. Stevenson, spoke of <u>persuasive definitions</u>[5] - definitions designed not to <u>inform</u> us about the concepts in question - but by their language to

persuade us to accept them. Here, in this proposed definition of 'opening' (in place of 'open') we have such 'in,' up-to-date words as 'process' movement' and 'continual dynamic growth.' Who could possibly be opposed to 'continual dynamic growth?' And as for 'child centered' as opposed to 'teacher centered' classrooms, only the most self centered teacher wants to be the center of attention - and even she wouldn't admit it as good theory. Clearly there is more going on here than meets the mind. The open or opening classroom may be a great idea - but we'd all be better off never having heard this definition of it.

In the preceeding section I have been assuming that at least some people act on the basis of their principles at least some of the time. Perhaps it may even be the case that most people so act at least some of the time. To this way of deciding (on the basis of ones principles) we may contrast those actions done in order to achieve some benefit or object of desire. I do not wish to claim that these two categories exhaust the types of decisions; but only that for purposes of this paper these are the significant ones to contrast. For when we offer someone an incentive it must be something which he wants -- and wants badly enough to put out extra effort for. In this way we can see that nothing is an incentive in and of itself, but that almost anything could act as an incentive -- could become incentive. If he does not want it badly enough

to put out extra effort, then it has not acted as an incentive.

So incentive language belongs to the language of our desires, wants, etc. in contrast to the language of principle, obligation, duty, and the like. Let it be said immediately that I have nothing against either form of language, nor against the social practices, institutions and forms of reasoning of which they are a part. I merely wish to contrast them, and remind us if our minds tend to concentrate too much on one, that the other exists and is also important.

HISTORICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL BASES OF INCENTIVE SYSTEMS

The concept of an incentive is not new. People have been offering and receiving them for a long time. But perhaps there is something peculiar and interesting in the offering of incentives in educational contexts.

The study of learning is not all that old; and the application of scientific methods to learning research in place of personal observation is even more recent. Because it is so easy and relatively uncontroversial to use non-human subjects, that element of learning called 'conditioning' has been most thoroughly studied. Even early on, it was widely believed that these methods would be relevant to human learning as well. Now after a bit of controversy and smaller scale testing, it has become apparent that especially in the classroom of younger children, incentives in the form of rewards that children

can appreciate do increase learning as measured in standard tests. A second area where incentives are often discussed, and to which we shall return later, is that of incentives to school personnel - incentive pay, performance contracting, etc.

So far as the classroom is concerned, therefore, the incentive system has its historical roots in behaviorism and concepts like 'operant conditioning' and 'behavior modification.'[6] Lipe and Jung[7] for example class incentives with those theories of motivation which stress external events rather than internal states, and distinguish a number of sub-types. "This view of learning ... assumes that the failure of a learner to achieve the instructional objectives... reflects flaws in the program rather than inadequacy in the learner."

Before we go on, however, we had better stop and pick up what may turn out to be important philosophical details. If a scientist says he is working with incentives, I will expect his use of the word 'incentive' to be slightly different - broader or narrower - from what it means in ordinary usage. To paraphrase a well known point made by Wittgenstein I might say - We can give the concept 'incentive' rigid limits, that is use the word 'incentive' for a rigidly limited concept, but we can also use it so that the extension is not closed by a frontier. And this is how we do use the word 'incentive.' How is it bounded? Can you give the boundary? No. You can draw one; for none has so far been drawn. To repeat, we can draw a boundary for a special purpose. Does it take that to

make the concept usable? Not at all - except for that special purpose.[8]

The scientist has a special purpose - scientific investigation - for which a boundary must be drawn. The only difficulty he is likely to encounter is translating his findings back into ordinary language. The extension of his concept will not be exactly the same as the ordinary one. And how will he tell us what he has discovered? Well, perhaps by teaching us his boundaries so we know how he is using the word. Everyone can get confused, however, and many times formers of boundaries have used a word in its normal sense and in its special purpose sense interchangably. If this occurs in an argument, the argument will necessarily be invalid. And so we must all be careful. For psychologists, educators and myself I'd like to say some things about the way the concept of 'an incentive' functions.

'Incentive' in its most typical cases involves the offering of things like rewards. A punishment for non-compliance or failure to meet a goal may motivate someone to try harder but it is not an incentive. In fact it is proper to say that the word 'incentive' is used precisely to mark off these positive inducements from negative ones. The threat of punishment or financial loss may act as a <u>deterrant</u> - fortunately not as an incentive.

Generally speaking an incentive is something offered in an attempt to get us to do something; or to do it in a <u>manner</u>

or to a degree that we might not have otherwise. To offer an incentive to do X, X must be something that I might not have done otherwise; and, it is probably something that I would not do otherwise. But we must examine the sense of 'would not do otherwise.' I would not have done X; but only because it was too hard, too time consuming, or generally 'not worth it.' The incentive makes it 'worth it.' If someone offers me money to do something which is against my principles, this too is something I would not do otherwise - and should not do anyhow. He is offering me a bribe, not an incentive. The lesson here is that to be an incentive for doing X, X must be something the doing of which I already am able to approve. We shall return to these points later.

It is time to look at the concept of 'incentive' as it occurs in psychology. Throughout the literature it is given a number of quite loose boundaries. Witryal remarks that the terms 'reinforce', 'reward' and 'incentive' are commonly used interchangably.[9] He goes on, however, to point out ways in which they are coming to be distinguished in the experimental literature. Starting with the concept of a reinforcer, rewards act as reinforcers to increase the probability of the response occurring again and also can increase its strength. The concept of an incentive is a construct from this. It has to do with anticipating the reward. Whereas rewards simply reinforce S-R habits or amplify stimuli, incentives produce learning of a second kind based on this standard S-R

conditioning. The same basic definitions are used by Logan and Wagner[10] where they point out that choice performance is based on incentive learning as well as habit. When two stimulus-response-reward patterns are equally expected, the one that is chosen indicates the incentive value of the reward.

This concept is similar to the ordinary one in its requirement that an incentive not just be a reward but an anticipated reward. It also allows for there being larger and smaller incentives. But it is also necessarily different. It is linked by definitions to the basic conceptions of behavioristic psychology which so far at least have not to any appreciable extent gotten into our ordinary modes of speech. Thus, there are implicative relations in this concept not found in the ordinary one. Most importantly, the incentive pattern of learning is regarded by behavioristic psychology (especially in combination with drives)[11] as the most important mode of learning. In ordinary language, to be conditioned and to be educated are two quite different kinds of things. This is not to say that ordinary language cannot contain mistakes as part of its structure - nor is this to be construed as opposition to behaviorism. I merely wish to point out differences and take a wait and see attitude on the evidence. But we must not allow the discussion to be too directly translated from scientific language to ordinary language in view of these somewhat different meanings.

In what follows I wish to offer a few loosely connected

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

comments that will improve even further our ability to see the relations between the ordinary conception of an 'incentive' and those usages appearing in the current literature. The concept of 'bribe' will be the key.

Though principles are not incentives to act in a specified manner, it is necessarily true that an incentive is not what is offered for doing something contrary to our principles. A bribe is. Suppose 'incentive pay' is offered to a teacher for reaching a certain goal with her class. It might seem that this money simply is an incentive - that any reward offered is an incentive apart from any point of view - that it is something objectively there - the money. But to break us of this impression, we might make up the following: 'One man's incentive is another man's bribe.'

Consider the following: Smith offers Jones money to help insure he will accomplish a certain task which he does not believe causes offense to Jone's principles. Smith says, 'I am offering Jones an incentive.' Jones' principles are offended, however, and he says either

(1) "Smith thinks he is offering me an incentive." (If he believes Smith does not know of the violation of his principles) or;

(2) "Smith is offering me a bribe." (If he believes Smith does know of the violation).

The above istuation can occur fairly frequently when the Smiths and Joneses are not at all known to one another. If a

large organization offers some group of people an incentive to perform X, it should be aware that this may be looked on as a bribe by at least some of the group. If the group has common principles that help bind it together it is even possible that the proposed incentive will violate the principle of the group as a whole in which case the entire group will respond antagonistically - having been offered what they see as a probable bribe. There will probably never be a question about an incentive offered to raise the reading or math ability of students being considered a bribe, since everyone is in favor of these goals. Yet if educators are offered incentives to change the size, distribution or personnel of their schools by government agencies, such a problem could conceivably arise.

Perhaps the biggest problem facing those who wish to study incentive systems for education is the quite wide variety of things which get referred to as incentives in the current literature. James S. Coleman is one of the more important of the current writers and yet the concept of an incentive is far from clear in his influential paper "New Incentives in American Education."[12]

We can note that in everyday affairs the word 'incentive' comes up rather rarely. Where incentive pay is part of a contract, its use is more common; but the general offering and receiving of incentives is quite rare. Compare this fact to the following: "Every organization can be described

as a system of incentives for its members."(p. 72) And we have seen that people change their behavior or even change their lifestyles (at least on occasion) by adopting new principles or by having a new 'philosophy' about the things in question. Compare this to: "... only by such modification [of the existing structure of incentives] will individuals be led to change their current distribution of time and energy."(p. 72) Coleman seems to regard this as axiomatic since no defense whatever is given. This indicates that somehow in his use of 'incentive' must be included all the sundry things that we normally think will lead a person to change. We also learn that no matter what the educational situation, "Incentives cannot be kept out." And this of course is because they are ubiquitious in every organization. Incentives are already operating on students, teachers and administrators and we must merely see whether these or some new incentives would be more useful.

Since the paper begins with no definition of incentive - no warning that "by incentive I mean ..."; we must try to discover from quotes like those above exactly what Coleman does have in mind. (Descartes no doubt made exagerated claims for the efficacy of clear and distinct ides; but that they are quite helpful we should not forget).

Coleman distinguishes <u>artificial</u> from <u>natural</u> incentives. (p. 73) The natural ones "impel learning in everyday contexts." Schools in general lack these(p. 73) and to make up for it

they "introduce extensive rewards and punishments" - artificial incentives. But what are the natural incentive structures for learning of everyday life? - "action, feedback, modified action."(p. 73) The world provides us with contingent responses, and these impel learning. We shall take no issue with the naturalness of the way in which the world teaches us -- but I am curious as to what this has to do with incentives. I can see what the so-called artifical ones have to do with incentives since at least they can be rewards and are offered by someone (and not mother nature) to someone (and not everyone). This at least is in the same conceptual ball park.

From the above we can conclude several things. Firstly, we can conclude that everything which influences a child for or against a certain action is an incentive and part of the incentive system. Secondly, we can see our attention drawn from the question of whether we should introduce incentives into education. Our real choice is: natural or artificial.

But let us get to Coleman's point. He is against offering any artificial incentives (in his sense) and thus against offering incentives (in the ordinary sense) altogether. This is logically true since the class of Coleman's artificial incentives includes the class of ordinary incentives. At the end of the paper he comes close to saying this outright when he claims that there are two ways to introduce new incentives. The one he indicates opposition to is what is

ordinarily meant by an incentive system.(p. 88,89) What he wants is to introduce his "natural incentives" as the new incentives in American education - "incentives that are closer to the natural incentives for learning."(p. 74) [S]uch events as debates and simulation games ... introduce a natural and intrinsic structure of incentives for learning...." Field trips and newspaper articles should also be used.(p. 74)

The above sounds very much like support for either progressive or open classrooms, and in fact Coleman does contrast his approach to teacher directed classrooms.(p. 83) The newest idea is that instead of having their incentives come from higher ups, that teachers and administrators should have incentives coming from the choice by their customers in a free market situation. (p. 88,89)

In this way Coleman can be part of two of the most up to date educational notions; viz. open education and the use of incentives. These were lines of thought which we had originally seen as in opposition. By changing radically enough the meaning of 'incentive' they can be made to seem compatible.

There is a second problem related to the tendency to refer to things as incentives which really are not. This second aspect is that regardless of what these things are called, they must at least be alike one another in important enough ways that it makes sense to lump them together for purposes of research or discussion. To call any individual

thing an incentive arrangement when it is not will lead to one kind of confusion; to call two significantly different things the same thing (incentive system or whatever) will lead to another.

Performance contracting, for example, though nearly always discussed as in incentive system is really not -- or at least not necessarily. Part of this tendency to think of performance contracting along with incentive systems is that those contracts often employ incentive devices in their work with the students. But this does not mean that the contract to pay only upon successful completion of a program to raise reading or math levels is an incentive device. It probably would be for a single individual with no other source of income. It probably would not be to an established company whose salaried employees may carry out the contract. For such a company -- not in financial trouble -- the performance contract is 'business as usual'. If a salaried employee did enter the classroom under a performance contract, his incentives -- if they are incentives -- have to do with his keeping his job and his standing among fellow workers. His paycheck -- though not the company's -- will come anyway. At any rate there is something unusual in saying that the local bakery regards my five dollars as an incentive to bake that cake I ordered. It is hard to imagine even the owner forging ahead with his task -- my five dollars driving him on. Of course he wants to make money and of course he would not

be in business long if he did not fill his orders; but that does not mean that the payment for each agreed to task is an incentive to complete that task. Yet this would be the only reason for discussing performance contracting, as such, along with incentives. A large amount of money offered directly to the person who will do the work would -- other things being equal -- act as an incentive; but a normal amount is, again, just business as usual. Put another way, incentives are added benefits; not the normal ones. If they were, then every paycheck is an incentive to do the job -- but incentive pay is something different.

The concept of an 'incentive' is also related to the concept of an 'inducement'. We might say that generally an inducement is a reward offered prior to some performance while an incentive is a reward offered subsequent to and contingent upon some performance. In ordinary life these are often combined as if we believed that their combination is more effective in securing the desired performance than either alone. "I'll give you X now, and Y when the job is done." Adding the element of inducement may make the incentive more operative since it helps remove any doubt about the sincerity of the offerring.

From the point of view of ordinary life one may well wonder why contemporary educators should concentrate exclusively on incentives for changing behavior. Ordinarily we offer inducements almost as often as incentives to get

things done. Of course incentives tie in with the work of experimental psychologists on stimulus-response-reward situations. And how does one experiment on lower animals by offering inducements? To a person we can explain what we want and that this reward will be taken back, never offered again, etc. if he does not actually do what the inducement was for. An inducement is not simply a gift -- though it would seem so to a lower animal. It is something which one may accept or not. Acceptance of the inducement implies a promise to perform the specified project in the specified manner. However, rejection of the inducement does not necessarily imply refusal to perform. The person may believe that the action is 'doing his job' or required by his principles -- for which he feels uncomfortable accepting any reward before or after. I keep returning to this point: people do some things for reward and some things as a matter of principle. And this is where a person's philosophy connects with our discussion of incentives as well as inducements.

One objection I foresee to the above is a behavioristic contention that doing things for reward and doing things on principle are not really different things -- that there are rewards for acting on principle, though of a different sort. I will not quarrel with the bahaviorist on that point (though there are a number of ways one might), so long as he will allow me to underline 'of a different sort'.

When we offer incentives we can control situations which

we might not be able to otherwise, and this among other factors leads us to concentrate our attention almost exclusively on this sort. Yet there are other things properly called incentives which have some things in common with these -- along with some differences.

For example a certain possible reward might act as an incentive for certain conduct without that possible reward ever actually having been offered. It need only be highly probably that the reward will be received for it to act as an incentive on a person's conduct. That a person with whom one is dealing is known to be generous if pleased can act as an incentive to try to please him even though that person has not actually offered anything. We might speak of this sort of thing as a naturally occurring incentive were it not for the fact that social convention as well as personal idiosyncracy are involved. Not everyone is generous when pleased and not all relations follow the 'tipping the waiter' model. Furthermore, there may be some sort of inability to, or rule against being generous even if one wants to be. Despite these uncertainties, if the reward is probable enough to make the added effort worthwhile, we can say that it acted as an incentive.

This sort of incentive may not seem important for policy, but something closely related is. It may not be merely probable but quite certain that if I accomplish something which takes special effort or ability, I will receive the praise of

a group -- friends, professional colleagues, etc. -- that I would very much like to have. The belief that this praise will be forthcoming acts as an incentive to put forth the extra effort. And related to this, though not specifically a case of incentives, is the situation where the doing or achieving of a certain thing would bring disapproval from the same sort of group. The relation to policy is that such conditions can often be manipulated. We can not only offer incentives, we can also work to strengthen those already present social and personal rewards which may act as incentives as well as attempt to weaken those pressures which inhibit the desired conduct.

There is another class of cases which are similar enough to standard cases of incentives that they too may -- harmlessly -- be called incentives. Suppose there is something which I do not want to do but which I must or ought to do. I could suffer the consequences of putting it off. On the other hand I could play a little trick on myself and offer myself an incentive for doing the task in question. Suppose there is something which I very much enjoy doing. I can make an agreement with myself that I will allow myself to do this only if I complete (at least a portion of) the task which I would rather not do. I might describe this by saying that I have offered myself an incentive -- and though this is surely an 'off color' use of the word incentive, it is quite harmless.

Relations between concepts such as motive and motivate, induce and inducement, not to mention incite, are not always what we might expect. Though pills may induce sleep they are not inducements. And, unless one is speaking older styles of English, inducemnts and incentives do not incite us to action -- are not inciting. We 'incite to riot' for example not by offering rewards of any sort but by oratory. And everything which motivates someone need not be a motive. A killer may have acted becausé of the monetary incentive offered by a third party. However, it is this third party and not the actual killer who has the motive (whatever it may be). All of these things we know perfectly well as we go along speaking our language, and yet are easily forgotten when we begin to reflect upon it all.

Despite all the above it is not always <u>necessary</u> that language be used correctly. If an officer of the law insisted he was searching for a killer's incentive, we might simply say that we know what he means and leave it at that. There are also cases where a word is used facetiously, or in quotation marks. The only necessity is that we not confuse ourselves or one another. No great harm is ordinally done by grammatical mistakes. Furthermore, there are borderline cases where there may be no correct way of speaking. Is a fetus a 'person' or 'human being' and thus covered by our principle against killing? The rules used in ordinary language do not give us an answer. We may draw a boundary which

includes or excludes them, since there are similarities and dissimilarities, but the most intellectually honest approach would be to revert to the term 'fetus'. Similarly, if 'incentive' is simply a short hand way of referring to a type of situation, clearly we could use a description of that type in place of the word 'incentive'. And so in borderline cases: since we have no short hand way of referring to it, we can revert to a description.

Furthermore, incentives are not the sorts of things which by themselves change our attitudes or beliefs. Notice: "We'll offer them an incentive to believe that the earth is flat." "This incentive will make them believe that lying is OK." We can perhaps offer a big enough incentive to get an ordinarily truthful person to lie; but that is not relevant to his attitude toward lying. To change that, some ideological change would have to take place; he would have to see some reason (in the sense of justification) to change his attitude. And this is another way of seeing the relationship between incentives, philosophies, principles, etc.

We have seen that there are men and women of principle - those who make their decisions in the light of their principles. I have also said that a principle is not an incentive to act in a certain way. Appealing to someone's ideological commitments or principles is actually an alternative to offering incentives as a way to modify their actions. If a teacher is not putting forward full effort, not preparing properly,

etc. we can of course offer an incentive to do so. But we can also appeal to her presumed belief in the value of education for her pupils, to the possibly harmful consequences of their not learning what they are supposed to. If this latter appeal is successful, the former is largely unnecessary.

We pointed out earlier that the incentive system seems to conflict with one of our most strongly held contemporary principles - viz, that education should develop from a child's natural curiosity or interest in knowledge. Clearly the classroom incentive system does connect in some way with the interests and inclinations of the child. It offers rewards for achievement which would not even be rewards if the child did not want them. But the childs' interest in these rewards - whether they be money, good grades, or something even more directly stimulating - is used to get him interested in something else he is presumed not to be interested in, or not to the proper degree. Strictly speaking, it is not even required that he develop an interest in this other thing - learning. All he needs to do is perform to the specified level.

Now it might be objected that there really is no difference between getting someone interested in learning a body of material by offering him a reward, and getting him interested by developing a relationship between that material and material he is interested in. In both cases he is interested in the other thing only because of its relation to something else. But this will not do. There are two differences.

The relation between the reward and the material to be learned is patently artificial -- completely the creation of a teacher -- whereas the relation between two subject matters if it exists at all, can be seen not to be simply anyone's creation. The field of interest in entirely within the realm of intellectual and practical curiosity. Secondly, the student never does really take an interest in the material any more than is necessary to pass whatever test the reward is contingent upon. It may be and often is forgotten the next minute -- as when one leaves an exam for which one has 'crammed.' But the material learned as a necessary outcome of ones genuine interests does appear to be retained -- is genuinely learned.

The same problem only partially arises on the level of incentives to teachers, administrators or administrative agencies. Both progressive and open education do assume that teachers have a strong interest not only in their students. but in learning in general. In this respect they self admittedly expect almost superhuman motivation on the part of teachers. But since curiosity and natural inclination are not assumed to be operating on them, one can offer them incentives to carry out their tasks, as a replacement for or supplement to their motivations to be educators.

As we have seen in the examination the concept of an incentive, this problem is inherent. For even if dedicated teachers are given incentive pay and do arouse the natural curiosity of their students, only <u>reinforcing</u> this with rewards,

there is still the tendency to substitute interest in the incentive for the original. Suppose as a student I am interested in the internal combustion engine. I want to learn how it works, etc. Next suppose a teacher offers me a small reward for doing well on a quiz about these engines. If it is too small it will not increase my interest; and if it is large enough to increase my interest it will be because I am now interested in the reward more than in the knowledge. I will as an expression of this, tailor my studying to the sort of quiz I expect to receive and not to satisfying whatever curiosity I may have had.

I do not see how we can avoid putting this problem to experimental test. Do incentives offered directly to human beings tend to replace any previous motivation or inclination they may have had? If so, won't the net effect be to produce students whose supposed natural curiosity and desire to learn is deliberately overriden and destroyed; as well as teachers and administrators who will be similarly affected. The entire principal of conditioning supports this. People will do what they are rewarded for doing. If they are not rewarded for having an interest in learning (students), or for the extent to which they develop interest in learning (teachers, etc.), then this is not what they will seek. If they are rewarded for succeeding on even the best of tests, then this and not a broad interest and curiosity is what they will get. The system of conditioning is meant in this respect to be foolproof

and I for one believe it probably is.

The final result of the questions raised as to the overall value of incentives in education will depend on weighing the results of empirical studies mentioned here and proposed at the conclusion of this paper.

Incentives seem to have two obvious points in their favor:

1. They produce immediately obvious results which can be used to justify expenditures; and
2. If properly set up, they work regardless of who administers them. Other methods of motivating learning in students seem more dependent on the personality and techniques of the teacher. Some teachers are so personally attractive to their students that these students would learn even under what would otherwise be the most unpopular of classroom techniques.

The use of incentives and their justification will of course vary with the target population. We feel comfortable offering children incentives to learn because the self discipline which many learning activities involve is a trait they are not yet expected to have acquired. We feel less comfortable, even angry, if we have to offer incentives to adults to do a job they are supposed to do, or to put forward their best efforts. Incentives may often be <u>necessary</u>; but they are rarely <u>desirable</u>.

There is a second way in which the use of incentives needs to be justified. Not every incentive that has been offered, earned and received has acted as an incentive! It acted as an incentive only if it was a main reason why the person did what he did. And since incentive offerings usually involve added expense, it is important to be sure that incentives that are given have been effective. For purposes of justification it must be probable that the performance would not have taken place had there been no incentive; or that the performance be so important that any expenditure is justified in order to take it certain.

THE PROBLEM OF JUSTIFICATION

It is in light of the preceeding issues concerning the long term consequences of incentive systems and of their possible conflict with traditional educational philosophy that we now turn more directly to the question of justifying the use of incentives as an educational policy. Let us grant that a person's philosophy has some bearing on this problem and first examine the traditional view of this relation.

Textbooks in the philosophy of education nearly always assume that the views the great philosophers have held on metaphysics or epistemology will have educational implications - that a student could build a philosophy of education for himself by studying what these great philosophers have

had to say. The student is also told that his philosophy of education is important because decisions about the aims and content of education are based in part on a philosophy of education. Until recently such generalities were about the only information we could get on the influence of philosophy on educational decision.

Glasman and Sell[13] refer to this study as 'neglected'. As recently as 1973, Thomas[14] observed that schools have not been much studied by organizational theorists at all - much less in their ideological components. Part of this, Thomas claims, is due to the fact that schools do not fit a Weberian rational-legal model - are not bureaucracies designed as rational models for production oriented organizations. (p. 91ff) A second factor would be the multiplicity of organized groups one would have to include. There are one room rural schools and large urban ones; there are small colleges and large universities; there are school administrations, local school boards, state boards, federal agencies and others. It is very likely that researchers will find not only that philosophies of education or ideologies vary, but that the extent and manner of their influence will vary with the level and type of administration studies.

Glasman and Sell have continued the traditional approach; i.e. that philosophies imply views about the conduct of education, in their "systematic examination of philosophical influences on administrative decision making in education.(p. 145)

But, whereas traditional philosophy of education spoke of philosophical views in the strict sense, implying consequences for education, Glasman and Sell speak of philosophy generating directly educational goals and objectives; and of ideologies evolving from philosophies. The basic model is: philosophy - generating ideology - generating goals and objectives - generating policy. Now the similarity to the traditional analysis is that philosophy in the sense of metaphysical and epistemological views is considered as the prime mover from which educational policies get their start. It would have been helpful to have had examples of this policy formation model. One question would be whether people actually develop their philosophies of education (or educational ideologies) from philosophy proper.

Interestingly enough, they would probably be making a logical mistake even if they did. Sidney Hook, D. C. Phillips and others have raised important issues concerning the logical relations that can exist between a specifically philosophical view and an educational one.[15] Glasman and Sell talk of philosophies generating ideologies, meaning educational ideas and values. (Note 11 p. 162) The traditional view in philosophy of education asks what some particular philosophy - say Materialism or Existentialism - implies for education.[16]

Both Hook and Phillips reply immediately - nothing! Phillips discusses various senses of 'imply' to show that the various philosophical 'isms' do not imply anything for educa-

tion. The point is that the general statement of a philosophical 'ism' says nothing about education and if there is to be a conclusion to a valid argument containing a reference to education, there must be at least one other premise connecting the 'ism' with education. (p. 9) Further, the connecting premises(s) will contain either explicit or implicit values, since they have to be practical principles linking theory to practice. (p. 13) Even philosophical theories of value will not do, since what is required in these premises are the values themselves - not theories about them. Taken by itself then, a person can hold any philosophical 'ism' he wishes and never need worry about a conflict between this and <u>whatever</u> views he holds on the aims or practices of education.[17]

If the traditional view of the justification of the aims and practices of education is incorrect, just what are the issues in the justification of the offering of educational incentives?

The justification of incentive offerings of any sort is tied to the justification of any educational, or for that matter, social policy. We have pointed out the current discussions showing that we cannot look to an educator's philosophy -- whether this be understood as a view about metaphysics, epistemology, etc. or as one of the various 'isms' -- for justification. Yet the question of the justification of an educational policy is an important one -- too important and too complicated to be resolved in a short space. Still, we

must at least see what the basic issues are.

We are involved here in questions of values, and these are held by many to be subjective -- by which I suppose is meant not just that each of us hold certain values to be true; but that they cannot be genuinely true or false. My values will be true to me and yours will be true to you, but neither of us is more correct than the other. In this they are usually classed opposite factual judgments which are said to be capable of being genuinely true or false. If I believe the earth to be flat, I am wrong and that is an end to it. And this is related to justification in that for the assertion that the earth is flat to be known to be false, there will be some valid arguement with true premises whose conclusion is that the earth is not flat. (We are assuming that no simple observation will suffice.) The difference then is supposed to be that factual utterances can have satisfactory justificatory arguements; or put another way, that conclusively good reasons could be given for their truth or falsity; whereas with value judgements it is commonly believed that no conclusively good reasons can be given for accepting one rather than another. Thus no individual need accept someone else's evaluations if he does not wish to.

This subjective theory of values is so commonly held by social scientists that "That's a value judgment" is the coffin-nail to further discussion. It may seem a bit foolish not to agree, but current philosophical thinking is

divided on the issue.[18] (And theory of value -- Axiology -- is a branch of philosophy.) One thing that can be said is that both the public at large and the social scientists who hold to the subjective theory do so for reasons which all the philosophical combatants would regard as incorrect. Therefore if the issue is an important one, an update in the thinking of professional policy makers is called for.

What is important about whether the subjective view is correct or not? If it is true, then whenever anyone tries to convince us that their particular policy suggestions are better than others, we should simply not bother listening further. Whatever he says is only propaganda. There is no such thing as being reasonable about one's values. Public discussion of educational policy should probably be avoided. To be convinced by good reasons is one thing -- but there can be none here (and no bad ones either), so why risk being influenced at all. Policy makers may make any decision they wish and cannot be faulted on any grounds of rationality.

On the other hand if the subjective theory is wrong it follows that in at least some cases, it will be possible to justify an educational policy in such a way that it will be demonstratably correct. If rationality can play a part in policy decisions, then it will be to the benefit of all of us for policy makers to try to meet any cannons of reason that may be discoverable.

PROPOSALS

1. Given the variation in the sorts of things that count as incentives for various current writers, one of the first requisites to meaningful dialogue on these matters is the development of a common linguistic base. Yet there is already a common base in our ordinary ways of speaking. For this reason it is suggested that the use of the word 'incentive' among professionals be restricted to that ordinary use. This will not only aid communication amongst investigators and practitioners, but will also facilitate communication with the public at large -- to whom in the long run educational proposals will probably have to be at least explained if not justified.

Some educators will want to support the use of motivation techniques which are similar to, but do not exactly fall under the ordinary meaning of 'incentive'. For them, it would be helpful if they would use such phrases as 'quasi-incentive', 'incentivators', and the like. These need definition since there is no established usage for them, and the writer's provision of that definition will distinguish his views from whatever view may be held about standard case incentives.

2. It is comparatively easy to test the short range results of incentive offerings -- but before commitment becomes too complete, consideration should be given to the long range consequences, especially as to the possible tendency to change

people's motivations towards ones of personal benefit and away from principles, obligations, etc. Students have long noted their tendency to become purely grade conscious, even when they had previously been interested in learning for its own sake. Experiments can be undertaken to determine if this is so. In the light of our educational values, we may then want to reassess the incentive system.

3. It might perhaps be worthwhile investigating the relative merits of inducements versus incentives. I am not aware of any advantage of the one or the other so far as the issues raised in this paper; but it does seem to me that inducements might turn out to be as important as incentives are now thought to be so far as stimulating educational performance is concerned. But this requires experimental work -- as does the question of how incentives and inducements may combine.

4. One aspect of the offering of incentives to motivate people to act in certain ways should be given careful empirical study. It seems at least possible that the desired behavior will not be continued if the incentive is not continued; i.e., that the motivation created by incentives may not be permanent. Consider the child that is already motivated in the direction of learning. If all the students were motivated, there would be no need to offer incentives to learn. So, we offer incentives, and the other children begin to act in the same manner as the motivated child, and progress well in their abilities.

What will happen if we subsequently remove the reward, don't offer that kind of incentive any longer? The motivated child might continue roughly as before, and some others will have discovered 'the joys of learning' and are now also motivated in that direction. But the majority have learned what they have and made the efforts they have <u>because</u> of the incentives offered. If we want to change their <u>attitude</u> toward learning, it would seem we will have to find some other way to do it.[19]

5. Those points made in the body of the paper about the importance of discussions on the justification not only of incentives in education, but of policy generally need not be repeated here. The first step in this might profitably be a review of the current status of philosophical thought -- though directed toward reasoning as it occurs in justifications of educational policy.

FOOTNOTES

1. The names most closely associated with this movement are Ludwig Wittgenstein and J. L. Austin, though many more deserve mention.

2. On this point see Lawrence A. Cremin The Transformation of the School New York: A. Knopf, 1968, p. 134.

3. For purposes of this paper the following were helpful: Interview with Vincent R. Rogers "Making the Case For Open Education" in Teacher Vol. 90 No. 8 (April, 1973), and Charles H. Rathbone "The Open Classroom: Underlying Premises The Urban Review Vol. 5 No. 1 (September, 1971) p. 8.

4. Roger Bybee "Opening Your Classroom" Teacher Vol. 90 No. 7 (March, 1973) p. 30.

5. C. L. Stevenson Facts and Values New Haven: Yale, 1963.

6. Traditional textbooks in philosophy of education which start with metaphysical conceptions and their supposed implications for education would claim that the incentive system in its relation to Behaviorism is an educational theory based in Materialism. A very similar point is made by Allen Harrison, Jr. and Eldon G. Scriver in "Educational Controversy: A Gloomy Prediction" Contemporary Education Vol. 44 No. 2 (November, 1972) p. 116. The gloom is generated by the fact that the materialist philosophy of education will probably win out over humanism.

7. Dewey Lipe and Steven Jung "Manipulating Incentives to Enhance School Learning," Review of Educational Research. Vol. 41, no. 4. October 1971. pp. 249-280.

8. Philosophical Investigations para.'s 68, 69.

9. Sam L. Witryal "Incentives and Learning in Children" in Hayne W. Reese (ed.) Advances in Child Development and Behavior Vol. 6 New York: Academic Press, 1971. p. 4.

10. F. A. Logan and A. R. Wagner Reward and Punishment Boston, Allyn and Bacon, 1965, p. 46. See also p. 3.

11. Roger W. Black "On the Combination of Drive and Incentive Motivation" Psychological Review Vol. 72 No. 4 (July, 1965) pp. 310-317.

FOOTNOTES continued

12. James S. Coleman "New Incentives in American Education" in James W. Guthrie and Edward Wynne New Models for American Education. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1971.

13. Naftaly S. Glasman and S. Roger Sell, "Values and Facts in Educational Administrative Decisions" Journal of Educational Administration. Vol. 10 No. 2 (October, 1972) p. 145.

14. Donald R. Thomas The Schools Next Time New York: McGraw-Hill, 1973, p. 90.

15. In particular D. C. Phillips Theories Values and Education (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1971) pp. 7ff. and Sidney Hook "The Scope of Philosophy of Education: Harvard Educational Review Vol. 26 (Spring, 1956) pp. 145ff.

16. Glasman and Sell do not actually employ the concept of 'implication;' but instead use words like 'generates' and 'evolves from' to discuss links between philosophy and policy. If these words do not come down to some sense of 'imply,' we need to be told what is meant by 'evolving' our ideologies from philosophy. Is this a rational process or is it non-rational?

17. It should also be noted that several writers have recently criticized the concept of 'aims' in education. The best known of these criticisms is R. S. Peters Authority Responsibility and Education N. Y.: Atherton, 1967. See Ch. 7, "Must An Educator Have An Aim?"

18. Representative examples of subjective views would be the writings of C. L. Stevenson and R. M. Hare. In opposition to this one can mention works by Kurt Baier and Stephen Toulman. The reader will find that a number of the remarks made at the conclusion of the immediately preceeding section of this paper presuppose a view other than the subjective one.

FOOTNOTES continued

19. I realize that at least one study suggests that my apprehensions here are unfounded. Harold F. Rothe "Output Rates Among Welders: Productivity and Consistency Following Removal of Incentives" Journal of Applied Psychology Vol. 54 No. 6 pp. 549-551. Rothe found that there was an immediate and large drop in production following removal, but that by a year later the production had come back to incentive level. In some phases of life such a lag back to full productivity may be tolerable so this may not be an objection. But the other problem in the study was that Rothe was able to identify other incentive factors working after the drop in incentive pay that presumably had not been working before. It is possible that these and not a natural process resulted in the return to incentive productive levels.

A similar point to the one in the text has been made, and other interesting problems raised, in an editorial discussion of incentives in Nations Schools. Vol. 68, No. 5. November 1970. pp. 51-54.